

Clarke County

PLANNING COMMISSION BRIEFING MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2016



A briefing meeting of the Planning Commission of Clarke County, Virginia, was held at the Berryville/Clarke County Government Center, Berryville, Virginia, on Tuesday, January 5, 2016.

ATTENDANCE

Present: George L. Ohrstrom, II; Anne Caldwell; Robina Bouffault; Randy Buckley; Scott Kreider; Douglas Kruhm; Frank Lee; Gwendolyn Malone; Jon Turkel; Cliff Nelson

Absent: None

Staff Present: Brandon Stidham, Planning Director; Ryan Fincham, Senior Planner/Zoning Administrator; Alison Teetor, Natural Resources Planner

Others Present:

CALLED TO ORDER

Mr. Ohrstrom called the meeting to order at 3:00.

AGENDA

Commissioners approved the meeting agenda by consensus.

Mr. Stidham provided an overview of the items for the January 8 regular meeting. He noted that the meeting would begin with the annual Organizational Meeting including election of officers, committee assignments, and approval of the 2016 meeting schedule, by-laws, and project priorities. Mr. Stidham highlighted the proposed changes to the project priorities list, specifically the recommendations to begin the process of updating the Agricultural Land Plan, Waterloo Area Plan, and Double Tollgate Area Plan in February. Ms. Bouffault asked about the status of the Berryville Area Plan update. Mr. Stidham replied that the Berryville Area Development Authority (BADA) is scheduled to hold their Public Hearing on the draft Plan on Wednesday, January 20. He said that ideally if any Commissioners have comments, they should be provided prior to the BADA's public hearing.

Mr. Stidham presented text amendment TA-16-01, Public Outdoor Recreation Facility Lighting, to the members as a proposed set public hearing item. He noted that the text amendment was prepared at the direction of the Board of Supervisors as Staff recently discovered that the current outdoor lighting regulations contain a maximum height limitation that impedes the installation of lighting for outdoor recreation facilities. A project is currently underway to install new lighting at Chet Hobert

Park and the maximum height limitation would prohibit installation of the proposed light poles and fixtures. He stated that the proposed text amendment would be limited to lighting installations by “public” entities including Federal, State, and local government agencies and Clarke County Schools. He noted that the plan review process would be governed by the IESNA Sports and Recreational Area Lighting standard which maximizes lighting effectiveness by ensuring that it is directed to appropriate areas on fields and that light spillover is minimized. He noted that this lighting standard is used by other counties in Virginia such as Frederick County and is generally accepted by dark sky organizations. He added that lighting plans submitted under this section would be reviewed by the County’s engineering consultant.

Mr. Stidham reviewed the items scheduled for Public Hearing – TA-15-04 (Board of Zoning Appeals Code of Virginia Amendments), TA-15-05 (FOC District Development Regulations), and the Agricultural & Forestal District (AFD) Six-Year Review. Regarding the FOC District text amendment, Mr. Turkel noted 4N-3-b which references “a plan for field delineating the no clear areas to guard against future clearing.” He said that permanent signage was discussed as a means of providing permanent field delineation of areas to be protected and was concerned that property owners may not want such signage on their property. Mr. Stidham said that this section does not require such signage to be maintained – only that it is initially installed per the approved plan. Mr. Lee asked what safeguards would be in place if signage is removed by a future property owner, and Mr. Stidham replied that you would still have the areas delineated on the record plat. Mr. Turkel said that if the record plat will be referenced in reviewing land disturbance plans, this should provide sufficient protection during the development phase. Mr. Stidham provided an example of a buffer signage program used in another locality that was successful and that encouraged landowners to mark and maintain their preservation areas with small, recognizable signs. Members commented that a similar effort could be successful here. Ms. Teetor said that organizations on the mountain could help out with the education process to promote an understanding of these regulations. Ms. Bouffault added that the County should be responsible for designing the signage.

Regarding the AFD Six-Year Review, Mr. Stidham distributed a revised version of the proposed County Code text amendment containing modifications recommended by the County Attorney. Members had no questions or concerns about this item.

Old Business Items

None.

New Business Items

Ms. Teetor presented the proposed text amendment to address the County’s streambank protection regulations. Mr. Ohrstrom asked why canopies and roofs are not allowed on docks and steps. Ms. Teetor replied that these structures are most likely to end up in the river during floods. She said that this is open to discussion, in particular to allow temporary canopies such as canvas awnings. Mr. Turkel suggested adding the word, “permanent,” to 3-E-5-e-6c to permit temporary canopies and the members agreed to the change. Ms. Bouffault also noted a small typo in 3-E-5-e-5c. Ms. Teetor added that property owners would have to obtain a zoning permit that would be reviewed in house by Planning Staff. Mr. Lee asked if Staff could provide a map showing the floodplain areas and perennial streams that these regulations would cover. Ms. Teetor said that she could assemble a map

and noted that there are 26 perennial streams in the County. Mr. Kruhm asked if it would be possible to approach the state agency responsible for the Lockes Mill boat landing to provide better waste disposal and permanent facilities. He said that he participates in cleanups along the river and noted that the waste conditions could be considered a health risk issue after busy weekends. Ms. Teetor noted that the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has previously stated that they do not have the manpower or resources to maintain boat landings. Mr. Turkel said that a cooperative arrangement with the County could help with this situation as recommended in the Recreation Component Plan.

Ms. Teetor said that if the members had no additional concerns, this item could be placed on the regular meeting agenda to set public hearing and members agreed to do so.

Other Business

Mr. Stidham provided updates on the Telecommunications Subcommittee's activities and the Berryville Area Plan update process.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:47PM.


George L. Ohrstrom, II, Chair


Brandon Stidham, Planning Director